ARABIC NEW-YEAR

AND

THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES

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I

THE NIGHT OF THE DECREE

The *lailat al-ḳadr* [1]) is called by its name only one time in the Koran, viz. in sūra 97: "Verily we sent it down in the night of *ḳadr*. And what maketh thee understand how excellent the night of *ḳadr* is? The night of *ḳadr* is better than a thousand months. Therein do the angels and the spirit descend, by the permission of their Lord, concerning every *'amr*. It [2]) is peace till the rising of the morn".

The beginning of sūra 44 touches the same idea: "Verily we have sent it down on a blessed night — for we were giving admonitions. In it is loosened every determined *'amr* as an *'amr* from us".

It is generally supposed that the object which was sent down in the night mentioned, is the Koran, cf. sūra 2, 181: "The month Ramaḍān in which the Koran was sent down". For according to all interpreters the night of *ḳadr* is one of the nights of Ramaḍān.

There seems to be no reason to doubt that Muhammad intended to say that it was the Koran which was sent down in the *lailat al-ḳadr* or in the blessed night. But the interpreters give divergent explanations of this sending down of the Koran. Ṭabarī in his commentary on sūra 97 mentions two opinions. According to one in that night the whole of the Koran was sent down from the *lawḥ maḥfūẓ*, the preserved table, to the lowest heaven; from there it was revealed to Muhammad in the course of twenty years. According to the other, Muhammad alludes to the first revelation of the Koran unto himself, a fact which consequently must have coincided with the *lailat al-ḳadr*.

It is not very easy to choose between these two opinions. Let us ask first the preliminary question: Is it certain that the first

1) It is said that *ḳadr* is a maṣdar, *ḳadar* a noun.
2) Viz. that night.

revelation unto Muhammad happened in Ramaḍān? According to Schwally [1]), this is the common opinion, based on sūra 97, 1 and 44, 2 as compared with 2, 181. For us it is just the point in question what these passages allude to. Schwally adduces, however, other material of importance, e.g. a passage in Ibn Isḥāḳ, where it is said that Muhammad received his first revelation while he practised *taḥannuth* on mount Ḥirā' in Ramaḍān, as people used to do in pagan times [2]). In the well known tradition describing the revelation of the opening verses of sūra 96, it is also said that Muhammad received this revelation while he practised *taḥannuth* on mount Ḥirā', but here it is not said that this happened in Ramaḍān [3]). And other traditions [4]) declare that the first revelation happened in Rabīᶜ I; these traditions belong to the large current which connects all important events in Muhammad's life with this month.

Tradition appears not to be unanimous. We may go further and ask: If Muhammad really received his first revelation in Ramaḍān, would not then early tradition have preserved overwhelming evidence regarding this fact? Yet, as we have seen, evidence is extremely scarce; moreover, in the traditions concerning the exact date of the *laila*, there is never the slighest allusion to its coinciding with the first revelation of the Koran.

So we must abandon tradition in this case and ask whether the Koran itself can give an answer on our question. In the first place it is to be observed that the three passages mentioned do not contain any reference to the first revelation of the Koran; they mention the Koran, or it as having come down. And in sūra 44, the second verse is immediately preceded by the words: "By the perspicuous book". It seems, however, of greater importance, that sūra 97, with its description of the *lailat al-ḳadr*, in which the Spirit and the angels descend on account of every *'amr*, wholly moves in the celestial sphere, which makes it probable that the coming down of the Koran also belongs to it. As a matter of fact, the loosening of the divine decrees may be placed side by side with the loosening of the Koran from the preserved table, rather than with the revelation of a part of

1) Nöldeke-Schwally, *Geschichte des Qorāns*, p. 82 and note 4.
2) ed. Weil, p. 151 *sq.*
3) Bukhārī, *Bad' al-Waḥy*, b. 3; Muslim, *Īmān*, t. 252—258 etc.
4) Nöldeke-Schwally, *o. c.*, p. 66 *sq.*

sūra 96. The idea of the preserved table was familiar to Muhammad, as appears from sūra 85, 22.

So we may call it probable, that in sūra 44, 97 and 2, 181 Muhammad is speaking of the coming down of the Koran to the lowest heaven. Still it is obvious that this picture supersedes an older one. There is a certain discrepancy between the term *lailat al-ḳadr* and the descriptions in sūras 97 and 44; for "the Night of the Decree" points to the decrees which were taken in this night, not to the loosening of decrees already taken. According to a Jewish tradition [1]) the decrees are fixed on the first Tishri and accordingly at this time man's fate is determined for the coming year. This idea was also known in Mesopotamia where the gods were represented to resort once a year to the room in the sanctuary which was called after these decrees.

Muslim tradition has preserved popular ideas similar to the Jewish and Babylonian ones. "In this night (the *lailat al-ḳadr*) Allah decrees every term and work and all food [that will be] till the same day of the next year" [2]). And: "Allah decrees [in this night] rain, food, life and death that shall be during the following year till the same night of that year" [3]). This is pre-muhammadan, popular theology. For according to official Muslim theology Allāh's decrees were taken before the creation of the world.

According to these popular traditions the *lailat al-ḳadr* is a New-Years' night. Consequently Muhammad's connecting it with the coming down of the Koran and of every determined *'amr* is of a secondary nature [4]).

Still, the angels' taking part in the heavenly affairs of this night, is probably also an old feature; for we know from the Old Testament that Yahwe holds his heavenly councils with the *benē elohim*, when important matters have to be decided. It is to be noticed that this idea has left a trace in an explanation of the term *lailat al-ḳadr* [5]): ليلة القدر اى الضيق فان الارض تضيق عن الملائكة

1) *Rosh ha-Shana*, fol. 16b.

2) Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr*, XXX, 143: فيها يقضى الله كل اجل وعمل ورزق الى مثلها.

3) Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Mafātīḥ al-Ghaib*, VI, 587: ان الله قدّر ما يكون فى تلك السنة من مطر ورزق واحيا وإماتة الى مثل هذه الليلة من السنة الاتية

4) It is, however in accordance with Muhammad's and official Muslim ideas when al-Rāzī says that decrees are not taken in this night, but only communicated to the angels, *o. c.*, VI, 587.

5) Rāzī, VI, 588.

In Atchin it is believed, that evil spirits do not haunt the earth in this night [1]).

Babylonian New-Year was celebrated in spring, Tishri is an autummal month, the *lailat al-ḳadr* belongs to Ramaḍān, originally the month of summer draught [2]). Consequently in early Arabia summer was considered as a New-Year's period — which does not imply that other seasons have not been considered in that way, for at a time it was not one, but the season which marked a new beginning [3]).

The *lailat al-ḳadr* has preserved a very peculiar character in various Muslim countries till the present day. "The gates of heaven being then opened, prayer is held to be certain of success. Salt water, it is said, suddenly becomes sweet on this night; and hence some devout persons, not knowing which of the last ten nights of Ramadán is the Leylet el-kadr, observe all those nights with great solemnity, and keep before them a vessel of salt water, which they occasionally taste to try if it become sweet, so that they may be certain of the night" [4]).

The belief that in the *lailat al-ḳadr* salt water becomes sweet, is also recorded by d'Ohsson: "... que tous les êtres inanimés y adorent Dieu; que toutes les eaux de la mer perdent leur salure et deviennent douces dans ces moments mystérieux" [5]). He makes mention of another curious belief regarding this night: "Les maris ne se permettent pas de coucher avec leurs femmes, ni les patrons avec leurs esclaves, dans la crainte d'avoir des enfans estropiés on défectueux; une opinion assez générale faisant regarder tous les enfans nés contrefaits comme conçus dans l'une des sept nuits saintes" [6]).

Further illumination on a large scale is practised in Constantinople [7]). In Atchin peculiar lamps are lighted and people delight in crackers [8]); similar customs are also practised in the night before the first of Shawwāl [9]).

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1) Snouck Hurgronje, *De Atjèhers*, I, 253.
2) Cf. Wellhausen, *Reste arabischen Heidentums*², p 94 *sqq.*
3) Cf. *Acta Orientalia*, II, 158 *sqq.*
4) Lane, *Manners and Customs of the modern Egyptians* (Paisley and London, 1899), p. 484 *sq.*
5) *Tableau général de l'empire Ottoman*, I, 260.
6) I, 261. 7) *l. c.*
8) Snouck Hurgronje, *De Atjèhers*, I, 253.
9) Snouck Hurgronje, *De Atjèhers*, I, 255.

All these popular beliefs and customs make it probable that the celebration of the *lailat al-ḳadr* has its roots, not in Muslim but in pre-muhammadan times. The relations between the *lailat al-ḳadr* and summer-solstice point to the same direction.

We may treat these relations in connection with the question: what is the date of the night of the decree? Canonical tradition says that Muhammad himself did not know it [1]). But it is added that the night is to be sought in one of the odd nights of Ramaḍān's last decade [2]). In some parts of the Muhammadan world the 27th is considered as the exact date [3]). It appears however from Arabic literature that not only the odd nights of the last decade of Ramaḍān were considered with a view to the *laila*. Ḳasṭallānī mentions the following possible dates: the first of Ramaḍān; its middle night; the 17th; one of the nights of the second decade; the 18th; the 19th; the first of the last ten nights; the 22nd till the 30th; one of the odd nights of the last decade [4]). Practically every night in Ramaḍān was possible; this is expressly said in tradition [5]): "The Apostle of Allāh was asked after the night of the decree while I listened; he answered: it is in the whole of Ramaḍān". And: "Look ye for the decree in the month of Ramaḍān" [6]).

It is of importance to state that these materials corroborate the view that the night of the decree is intimately connected with the month of Ramaḍān, and consequently with summer-solstice.

Some traditions mention peculiar signs in the sun on the morning after this night [7]), as well as peculiar signs in the night itself. As far as I see the moon is never mentioned in this connection and probably the night does not derive its peculiar character from any extraordinary importance attached to the moon. Moreover, such a connection would be in contradiction to the fact, that the exact date of the night cannot be given. Further

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1) Bukhārī, *Īmān*, b. 36; Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, II, 291.

2) Muslim, *Ṣiyām*, trad. 205—221 etc.

3) For Turkey cf. d'Ohsson, I, 261; for Atchin: Snouck Hurgronje, I, 253. For Egypt: Lane, p. 485 *sq.* Cf. Muslim, *Musāfirīn*, trad. 179, 180; Tirmidhī, *Ṣawm*, b. 72.

4) III, 489.

5) Abū Dā'ūd, *Shahr Ramaḍān*, b. 7. Cf. Nawawī on Muslim, III, p. 124.

6) Tabari, *Tafsīr*, XXV, 59. It is of course Muslim invention when it is said that on the first of Ramaḍān the codices of Abraham, on the sixth the Tora, on the sixteenth the Psalter, on the eighteenth the Gospel, on the 24th the Furḳān have come down (*o. c.*, XXV, 58).

7) Zurḳānī, Commentary on the *Muwaṭṭa'*, II, 142; Muslim, *Ṣiyām*, t. 220.

it is to be remembered that the new year and the new season are important moments in the life of the sun, not in that of the moon.

The blessed night in which the Koran was sent down and in which every determined *'amr* is loosened (sūra 44, 2—4) is, according to the majority of the commentators [1]) the *lailat al-ḳadr*; we have seen that the popular interpretation till the present day connects the night of the decree with the coming down of the Koran. Other commentators, however, identify the blessed night with the 15th of Shaʿbān. This identification seems to be refuted by the fact that in sūra 97 the coming down of the Koran is connected with the *lailat al-ḳadr*. Still, it is not difficult to find out how it is, that tradition in this point is not uniform. For till to-day the night of the 15th Shaʿbān is considered throughout the Muslim world as the real night of the divine decree concerning life and death of human beings. In this night the tree of life is shaken, on whose leaves the names of the living are written. The names written on the leaves which fall down in this night, indicate those who will die in the coming year. This belief is prevalent in Arabia and in Atchin [2]); also in Egypt the night is considered as fatal [3]); everywhere people say prayers.

This belief is already recorded by Ṭabarī; it is probably pre-islamic. But let us hear 'Ikrima's tradition as it is recorded by him: "In the middle might of Shaʿbān the matters of the whole year are fixed and a separation is made between the living and the dead. And those who will partake of the *ḥadjdj* [of that year] are recorded; none is added to this number nor anyone cancelled" [4]). — It is obvious that this is another New-Year's night; this accounts for the uncertainty of the exegetes of sūra 97 and 44 as to the question which of the two nights is meant; for both are of a similar nature.

A second remarkable feature is the connection between New-Year's night and the *ḥadjdj*. The same connection with the *ḥadjdj* is vindicated for the *lailat al-ḳadr*: "In the *lailat al-ḳadr* permis-

1) Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr*, XXX, 59.
2) Snouck Hurgronje, *Mekka*, II, 76; *De Atjèhers*, I, 238 *sq.*
3) Lane, *Manners and Customs*, p. 477.
4) XXV, 59: في ليلة النصف من شعبان يُبْرَم فيه امر السنة وتنفسخ الاحياء من الاموات ويكتب الحاج ولا يزاد فيهم احد ولا ينقص منهم احد

sion is given to those who will partake of the *ḥadjdj*; their names are written down as well as those of their fathers. And none will fail; none is added to this number, nor is any one cancelled" [1]).

What does this tradition mean? Apparently it is not a Muslim conception and, if this be true, the pilgrims are not recorded with a view to heavenly wages. We may suppose that, as a rule, every man in early Arabia who could, did partake of the *ḥadjdj*, just as every Israelite was bound to appear before Yahwe on the festivals. Then the list of those who were to partake of the *ḥadjdj*, would mean a list of the living. Now it is to be remembered that the *ḥadjdj* was also a New-Year's festival [2]). It opened the autumn or closed the summer. Does not the tradition of the pilgrim's list dressed on the 15th Shaʿbān or in the *lailat al-ḳadr* point to the primitive idea, that at those dates matters were regulated not for the coming year, but for the coming season, in this case the summer period? It seems to me very probable.

A third point to be considered is this: how is it that tradition clearly indicates two New-Year times in summer, one on the 15th Shaʿbān, the other on the *lailat al-ḳadr*? The question is connected with the date of the *lailat al-ḳadr*. As has been shown above, this is uncertain. According to Zamakhsharī [3]) between the 15th Shaʿbān and the night of the decree lies a period of forty nights. This period is too short to authorize us to consider both days or nights as two distinct New-Year's dates. They could be conceived of as of a kind of heavenly sabbath or armistice ere the new relations with mankind were opened again, a kind of suspensory period during which human beings thought it for their best to keep quiet as much as possible, lest the attention of Heaven should be drawn to their behaviour, except *in bonam partem*. We shall have occasion in the course of this enquiry to return to this idea. Here we may remark that among other peoples such periods are well known. They may be due to uncertainties of primitive chronology; they may also be based on the fact that primitive observation of the sun was not able to fix the four critical points of the year with approximative exactness; they are,

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1) Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr*, XXX, 143: يؤذن للحاج فى ليلة القدر فيكتبون باسمائهم واسماء ابائهم فلا يغادر منهم احد ولا يزاد فيهم ولا ينقص منهم

2) Cf. *Acta Orientalia*, II, 162.

3) *Kashshāf* ad sūra 44, 1—3.

partly, really meant as periods [1]). However this be, it is to be remembered that the festivals in the beginning of winter vary between the 21st December and the 6th January; that the Mandaeans knew a series of days in spring, between the old and the new year; and that the date of the Jewish new year which since long is the 1st Tishri, has once been the 10th of that month [2]). In the *Talmud* it is said that heavenly decrees are taken on the first Tishri, and that they are sealed on the 10th of that month. Finally it is to be observed that according to the Muslim conception the 15th Sha'bān is the night in which forgiveness of sins is to be obtained. "The Apostle of Allāh said: If the middle night of Sha'bān comes, perform ye vigils in that night and fast that day; for in it Allāh descends at sunset to the lowest heaven saying: If there is any one who asks for forgiveness, I will forgive him; if there is any one who asks for food, I will give him; if there is any one who is suffering, I will give him health; if there is any one etc. etc., till dawn" [3]).

Zamakhsharī tells us that this night was called البراءة i. e. quittancy, because in it Allāh gave his faithful servants quittancy for sins committed.

II

THE NIGHT OF THE DECREE, RETREAT AND RAMAḌĀN

According to canonical tradition Muhammad used to practise *iʿtikāf* or *djiwār* [4]), i. e. pious retreat. This was an old-Arabian rite; ʿUmar is said to have asked Muhammad whether he was obliged to carry out his vow to pass a night of *iʿtikāf* in the sacred mosque of Mekka [5]) — a vow which he had promised in

1) Cf. The Appendix.

2) Hezekiel 40, 1.

3) Ibn Mādja, *Adhān*, b. 191: اذا كانت ليلة النصف من شعبان فقوموا ليلها وصوموا نهارها فان الله ينزل فيها لغروب الشمس الى سماء الدنيا فيقول الا من مستغفر لى فاغفر له الا مسترزق فارزقه الا مبتلى فاعافيه الا كذا الا كذا حتى يطلع الفجر. Cf. Tirmidhī, *Sunan*, b. 39; Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, II, p. 176.

4) e. g. Bukhārī, *Faḍl lailat al-ḳadr*, b. 3.

5) Bukhārī, *Iʿtikāf*, b. 5, 15, 16; *Khums*, b. 19; Abū Dā'ūd, *Ṣawm*, b. 80; Ibn Mādja, *Ṣiyām*, b. 60; Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal II, p. 82, 153 *sq.* etc.

the time of the *djāhilīya*. There seems to be no reason to doubt the truth of such reports.

The main current of tradition fixes the time of Muhammad's retreat in the last ten days or nights of Ramaḍān. "The Apostle of Allāh used to practise *iʿtikāf* in the last ten of Ramaḍān" [1]).

Yet the first and the second decade of that month are very often mentioned, e. g.: "The Apostle of Allāh practised *iʿtikāf* in the first ten of Ramaḍān and we did so; then Gabriel visited him and said: that which thou seekest, lieth before thee. Thereupon he retired during the middle ten and we did so. Then Gabriel visited him and said: That which thou seekest, lieth before thee. Then, on the morning of the 20st, Muhammad stood as a *khaṭīb*, saying: Whose hath retired with the prophet, shall return [to his place of retreat]: for I saw the *lailat al-ḳadr* in a dream, but I have forgotten its [date]; lo, it is in one of the last ten, on an odd date" [2]) etc.

Here it is expressly said that the uncertainty regarding the time of *iʿtikāf* depended upon the uncertainty of the *lailat al-ḳadr*, for an intrinsic connection is laid in this tradition between the two. Just as the Night of the Decree may happen to be any night of Ramaḍān, so *iʿtikāf* may take place is any of its three decades. A few more examples may illustrate the connection between the retreat and the Night. "The Apostle of Allāh practised *iʿtikāf* in the middle decade of Ramaḍān, seeking the *lailat al-ḳadr*" [3]). And Ḳasṭallānī says: "*Iʿtikāf* belongs to the consolidated *sunna*'s, especially in the last ten of Ramaḍān, with a view to seeking the *lailat al-ḳadr*" [4]). The connection between the two may also appear from the fact that *iʿtiḳāf* is practised chiefly at night time. ʿUmar vows to spend a night in the Mekkan *masdjid* and Ḳasṭallānī concludes from a tradition that people used to do *iʿtikāf* during the night rather than in the day time [5]).

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1) Bukhārī, *Iʿtikāf*, b. 1, 6, 8, 18 etc.

2) Bukhārī, *Adhān*, b. 135. Cf. Muslim, *Ṣiyām*, tr. 214: ان رسول الله اعتكف العشر الاول من رمضان ثم اعتكف العشر الاوسط فى قبّة تركيّة

3) Muslim, *Ṣiyām*, tr. 217: اعتكف رسول الله العشر الاوسط من رمضان يلتمس ليلة القدر

4) III, 500: وانه من السنن المؤكدة خصوصا فى العشر الاواخر من رمضان لطلب ليلة القدر

5) III, 507 3 infra: فيه إشعار بأنهم اعتكفوا الليالى دون الأيّام

It may be called certain that sūra 97 in which the Night is mentioned belongs to Muhammad's Mekkan period [1]). It is not easy to say whether old-Arabian *iʿtikāf* was practised by Muhammad and his adherents as early as that period. According to Ibn Isḥāḳ [2]) similar rites were familiar to the pagan Mekkans themselves and consequently the behaviour of the Muslims would not have been too irritating to them. But we must leave the question undecided. The reports of canonical tradition are not of nature to throw any light on it. There is, however, one verse in the Koran which mentions the rite. Sūra 2, 184 belongs to the passage which regulates fasting in Ramaḍān. It runs thus: "Abstain from them (viz. women) while ye are *ʿākifūn* in the places of worship" [3]).

Fasting in Ramaḍān was not introduced before the year 2 A. H. *The terminus a quo* for this verse is consequently the same year. In this year *iʿtikāf* appears as a rite already familiar to the Muslims. Probably it has been practised by them before, in Medina in the year 1 A. H., perhaps already in Mekka. So even before the year 2 A. H. Ramaḍān was no common month for the Muslim community, because of the venerable Night, and because of *iʿtikāf* which was based on that night.

Both, the Night of the Decree and retreat during ten nights or days, had given rise to ascetical rites such as fasting, abiding in the mosque etc. In the light of these facts the institution of fasting in Ramaḍān in the year 2. A. H. seems to be only one step further in a direction already familiar to Muhammad's community. This conclusion is in opposition to the opinion of nearly all modern scholars who have dealt with the institution of fasting in Ramaḍān. According to them Muhammad borrowed the idea of a thirty-days' period of fasting from one of the neighbouring religious communities such as Christians or Harraneans [4]). Contrary to such conjectures, Houtsma has forwarded the view, that Ramaḍān was a common Semitic mourning period. This view is based on the fact that the Jews used to fast during a period extending from the 17th of Tammuz to the middle of Ab, i. e. the time of summerheat corresponding to early-Arabian Ramaḍān [5]).

1) See Nöldeke—Schwally, *o. c.*, p. 94 *sq.*

2) As cited above, p. 2.

3) ولا تباشروهن وانتم عاكفون فى المساجد

4) References in Nöldeke—Schwally, *o. c.*, p. 179, note 1.

5) Cf. *Verslagen en Mededeelingen der Kon. Akad. v. Wetenschappen*, Afd. Letterkunde, 4e reeks, deel II, p. 3 *sqq.*

There are other arguments which favour the view, that the Ramaḍān-fast is the reinstatement of an old institution. I am not the first to state that Ramaḍān has an intrinsic connection with the *lailat al-ḳadr*. Speaking of the latter, Snouck Hurgronje says: "die Nacht der Macht.... deren Heiligkeit die des ganzen Monats begründet" [1]). We are probably right in putting it thus, that Ramaḍān is the New-Year's month, just as the *lailat al-ḳadr* is the New-Year's night. Thus fasting, prayer and vigils in that month are an atonement for the sins of the past [2]); and throughout the Muslim world Ramaḍān is considered as the month of repentance and atonement [3]). "In this month the rebellious Satans are bound, so that they cannot attain what they attain in other months" [4]). This tradition occurs in a great many various forms; so does another tradition saying that in Ramaḍān the gates of Paradise are opened and those of Hell closed [5]).

Even in the Koran its institution as the time of fasting is justified, as it were, by the coming down of the Koran: "the month Ramaḍān, in which the Koran was sent down" [6]); this means that here also fasting in Ramaḍān is considered as having its basis in the Night, for in the latter the Koran was sent down.

Another fact deserving attention is this, that in the present world of Islam Shaʿbān (in which the other New-Year's day lies) is the month sacred to the dead [7]); the feast of All-souls shows nearly everywhere its relations with New-Year [8]). Tradition maintains that Muhammad in no month, except Ramaḍān, fasted so many days as he did in Shaʿbān [9]). This custom may go back to the sanctity of the month Shaʿbān in early Arabia. Muhammad's fasting consequently covered not only Ramaḍān but a period of perhaps two months or six weeks, of which the 15th Shaʿbān and the Night were the two centres.

These are arguments favouring the view that early Arabia,

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1) *Mekka* II, 84.

2) من قام رمضان ايمانا واحتسابا غفر له ما تقدّم من ذنوبه is a tradition that occurs *passim* in the books of tradition; قام is often interchanged with صام

3) Snouck Hurgronje, *Mekka*, II, 78; *De Atjèhers*, I, 247 *sq.*

4) Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, II, p. 292.

5) Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, II, p. 230.

6) Sūra 2, 182.

7) Snouck Hurgronje, *De Atjèhers*, I, 236 *sq.*

8) Frazer, *Adonis*, *Attis*, *Osiris* (London 1907), p. 301 *sqq.*

9) Bukhārī, *Ṣawm*, b. 52; Muslim, *Ṣiyām*, t. 175, 177.

just as it knew of the sacred character of 15th Shaʿbān and the *lailat al-ḳadr*, was also acquainted with the sanctity of the time lying around or between the two dates. We may remember here Ibn Isḥāḳ's tradition [1]) according to which the people of the *djāhilīya* practised *taḥannuth* on the sacred mount Ḥirā' in Ramaḍān. Jaussen has observed, concerning the Beduins in the country of Moab that the tribes which do not fast in Ramaḍān, as well as those who fast, equally celebrate its end by a sacrifice [2]).

The introduction of the Ramaḍān-fast by Muhammad happened, according to Muslim tradition in Ramaḍān of the year 2 A. H. We know that in the preceding months an important change in Muhammed's attitude towards the people of the book had taken place. Probably in the first half of this year he had given revelations concerning the "religion of Abraham". In his *Mekkaansche Feest* Snouck Hurgronje has shown that they had the intention to liberate Muhammad from his dependency on the Jews and their institutions, as well as to bring the Muslims nearer to the early-Arabian rites which culminated in the pilgrimage to Mekka. In this way the *ḥadjdj* found its way into Islam. A second consequence of Muhammad's changed attitude was his abandoning Jerusalem as the *ḳibla* and his turning towards Mekka during the *ṣalāt*. Probably the new *ḳibla* was introduced in Radjab or Shaʿbān of the year 2 A. H. [3]). In the end of the same month the fast of Ramaḍān was issued as a divine commandment. This institution brought about the giving up of *ʿĀshūrā'* as an obligatory day of fasting.

It is not, with a view to these facts, highly improbable that the fast of Ramaḍān should have been taken over from the Christians or the Harranians? And is it not very probable that Ramaḍān meant a return to old-Arabian tradition, just as the institution of the *ḥadjdj* and the new *ḳibla*? It is said that the long period of fasting was difficult to the early Muslims [4]). This brings us again back to *iʿtikāf*. It is hardly to be believed that Muhammad would have introduced this penible rite after having burdened the fast of Ramaḍān on the shoulders of his community. This is an argument in favour of our chronological reconstruction of the introduction

1) See above, p. 2.
2) *Coutumes des Arabes au pays de Moab*, p. 390 *sq.*
3) Cf. *Mohammed en de Joden te Medina*, p. 133.
4) Bukhārī, *Ṣawm*, b. 39: نزل رمضان فشق عليهم

of the *lailat*, *iᶜtikāf* and Ramaḍān in this sequence and with intervals between the second and the third at least. Probably *iᶜtikāf* has to some extent been superseded by the Ramaḍān-fast. Literature till the present day has to tell us a great deal about the *lailat al-ḳadr* and Ramaḍān, but much less concerning *iᶜtikāf*. It is described by d'Ohsson [1]), it is true. But Lane does not mention the term, nor is it mentioned in *Mekka* or *De Atjèhers*. Professor Snouck Hurgronje tells me, that he has the impression that neither in Arabia nor in our Indies the rite is really a living one.

Otherwise it was and is with the nocturnal *ṣalāt* in Ramaḍān which is called *tarāwīḥ* and usually consists of 20 *rakᶜa*'s, divided into groups by *taslīma*'s [2]). In several parts of the Muslim world this *ṣalāt* is very popular and practised even by people who are not very punctual regarding obligatory prayer. Tradition tells us, that up to ᶜUmar's time the *tarāwīḥ* bore a private character; people went to the mosque where they performed this *ṣalāt* by themselves. ᶜUmar united individuals into groups behind *imām*'s [3]). So this nocturnal prayer received the character of a *ḏjamāᶜa*, but it never became obligatory. This state of things has prevailed till the present day. "Darum wird sie (die *Tarawīḥ-ṣalāt*) auch nirgends von der Gemeinde als solcher abgehalten, und sind die Imāme Gelegenheitsvorbeter; auch wenn bei der Moschee angestellte Imāme die Führung einer Tarāwhīḥ-Gesellschaft übernehmen, thun sie dies jedoch ohne jeden officiellen Charakter" [4]). One is inclined to conjecture that the *tarāwīḥ* as a less penible rite, have superseded *iᶜtikāf*.

III

THE RITES OF RETREAT

The lawbooks contain more or less detailed descriptions of the rites of *iᶜtikāf*, to which I refer those who desire to know what juridical questions are connected with the subject [5]). We shall

1) II, p. 7 *sq.*
2) Ḳasṭallānī III, 485; Snouck Hurgronje, *Mekka*, II, 81 *sq*; *De Atjèhers*, I, 247 *sq.*
3) Bukhārī, *Tarāwīh*, b. 1.
4) Snouck Hurgronje, *Mekka*, II, 81 *sq.*
5) e. g. Shāfiᶜī, *Kitāb al-Umm*, II, p. 90—93; Shīrāzī, *Tanbīh* (ed. A. W. T. Juynboll) p. 68, etc.

discuss those only which are of interest for the history of religion. *I'tikāf* is an ascetical rite, to such an extent that we could consider it as a preliminary of the institution of Ramaḍān. Some of the authorities declare fasting necessary during the retreat. According to Ḳasṭallānī [1]) this is the attitude of the Ḥanafites and the Mālikites; it is also Abū Dā'ūd's [2]) and Ṭabarī's [3]) opinion. Among the Shāfi'ites predilection is shown for fasting combined with retreat [4]).

Also in another respect *i'tikāf* partakes of the character of ascetical rites: it cannot be performed without sexual abstention. The attitude of the lawyers in this case is determined by sūra 2, 183: ولا تباشروهن وانتم عاكفون فى المساجد. But according to Ḳasṭallānī sexual intercourse is not prohibited on account of the sanctity of the place but "because intercourse on purpose annihilates *i'tikāf*; nay even kissing and the lascivious touching of [women] are prohibited during *i'tikāf*, on account of the conditions mentioned before in the chapter on fasting" [5]).

And tradition tells us, that Muhammad used to abstain from his wives during his periods of *i'tikāf*: "When the ten [of Ramaḍān] came, Muhammad used to fasten his *izār* and to perform vigils" [6]).

According to some interpreters the fastening of the *izār* is a metaphorical expression denoting religious zeal; but Ḳasṭallānī who bases his view on that of the *imām*'s preceding him prefers the explanation that it means sexual abstention. He cites the following verse [7]):

قوم اذا حاربوا شدّوا مآزرهم عن النساء ولو باتت بأطهار

"people who, when they are in the state of war, fasten their *izār* [abstaining] from women, even if the latter should be pure". The verse is not only remarkable as a *locus probans* for his view,

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1) III, 502.

2) *Ṣawm*, b. 80 ولا اعتكاف الّا بصوم

3) *Tafsīr* II, p. 101. For the Mālikites, cf. *Muwaṭṭa'*, *I'tikāf*, b. 4.

4) Shīrāzī, *Tanbīh*, p. 68: والافضل ان يكون بصوم

5) III, 499: لأن الوطء العمد مفسد للاعتكاف بل يحرم به التقبيل واللمس بشهوة بالشروط السابقة فى الصوم

6) Bukhārī, *Lailat al-ḳadr*, b. 4: كان النبىّ اذا دخل العشر شدّ مئزره وأحيا ليله

7) III, 498.

but also as an illustration of the warrior's sexual abstinence in early Arabia [1]).

The expression is realistic. It means the fastening of the *izār*, so that sexual intercourse becomes impossible, unless it should be undone. The term is also used in traditions describing how Muhammad cherished his wives, even during their monthly period; in order to prevent cohabitation, which is then prohibited, they put on the *izār* [2]). The two citations teach us, that the Arabian warrior as well as those who were bound to temporary abstinence by religion, used to fasten their *izār* during their *iḥrām*.

It is not probable that Muslim theologians have added such features as fasting and sexual abstention to the rites of *iʿtikāf*; Ramaḍān is already penible enough. We may take it as certain, therefore, that in the *ḏjāhilīya* the time of summer solstice had given rise to ascetical rites some of which may have been combined in accordance with local or tribal customs. — As to the place where *iʿtikāf* has to be performed, there is no common opinion among the *faḳīh*'s: same prescribe a *ḏjāmiʿ*, others do not object to a *masḏjid*, some allow women to cling to the place where they are accustomed to perform *ṣalāt* in their houses, and a few allow this even to men [3]); but it is customary to reside in a mosque or a *ḏjāmiʿ*. From some books it is to be concluded that some people even went so far as to limit the rite to the *ḏjāmiʿ*'s of Mekka, Medina and Jerusalem [4]). Bukhārī defines his view in the *tarḏjama* of bāb 1 of his chapter *Iʿtikāf*, by the words [5]): والاعتكاف في المساجد كلّها

It is further said in many traditions that Muhammad did not leave the place where he performed *iʿtikāf* except in case of a natural necessity [6]), and the *faḳīh*'s prescribe the same rule to the *muʿtakif*. Religious duties of the Muslim, such as visiting the sick and following funeral processions, are to be abandoned

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1) Cf. W. Gottschalk, *Das Gelübde nach älterer arabischer Auffassung* (Berlin, 1919), p. 138 *sqq*.

2) Muslim, *Ḥaiḍ*, trad. 1.

3) Zurḳānī on the *Muwaṭṭa'*, *Iʿtikāf*, t. 3.

4) Does the well-known tradition: لا تُشَدّ الرحال الاّ الى ثلاثة مساجد refer also to this opinion?

5) Cf. Ḳasṭallānī *ad locum*.

6) حاجة الانسان or حاجة انسان, cf. Bukhārī, *Iʿtikāf*, b. 3; Muslim, *Ḥaiḍ*, t. 6; Tirmidhī, *Ṣawm*, b. 80; Ibn Mādja, *Ṣiyām*, b. 63; Mālik, *Iʿtikāf*, t. 1, 2; cf. 5, 7.

7) Abū Dā'ūd, *Ṣawm*, b. 80; Mālik, *Iʿtikāf*, t. 2, 3; cf. Ibn Mādja, *Ṣiyām*, b. 63.

in the state of *iʿtikāf* [1]); some authorities, however are not so strict [2]).

It is of importance for our further inquiry to pay a close attention to some passages bearing on these prohibitions. "Mālik says: The *muʿtakif* is not a *muʿtakif* if he does not avoid what the *muʿtakif* has to avoid: visiting the sick, *ṣalāt* over biers [even those of his two parents when they have died together], entering houses, except for a natural necessity. [Sometimes, however, visiting the sick and going out in order to follow a bier becomes *wādjib*, viz. if one of his two parents has become ill or died, but the other is alive; in that case his *iʿtikāf* has become vain. But going out if both his parents have died, is prohibited]. Mālik says: Ibn Shihāb [3]) was asked whether the *muʿtakif* may enter a place provided with a roof, in case of necessity. He answered: Yes, it is of no consequence. [This is also the opinion of Mālik, Shāfiʿī and Abū Ḥanīfa; but a good many [4]) *faḳīh*'s say: If the *muʿtakif* enters a place provided with a roof, his *iʿtikāf* becomes vain" [5])].

The evidence afforded by this passage, combined with the data mentioned above, authorize us to state that the strictest schools consider religious retreat as a kind of *iḥrām*, a state comparable to that of the Naziree whose state of holiness became vain when he came into touch with the dead. All these restrictions bear the stamp of primitive taboo. It is worth while to observe that this taboo even extends to places provided with a roof.

We have seen that according to Muslim custom the idoneous place for retreat is the mosque. We do not know where the pagan Arabs performed the rite. Perhaps it may be concluded from ʿUmar's vow to pass a night in the sanctuary at Mekka, that sacred places were preferred. This hypothetical conclusion may be combined with that we just found concerning the house being taboo during retreat, i. e. originally in the time of summer solstice in Ramaḍān. Tradition gives some details as to where Muhammad performed his *iʿtikāf*, viz. in a tent in the mosque [6]). It is to be

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1) Cf. Ḳasṭallānī III, 505[5] *sqq.*

2) Bukhārī, *Ṣawm*, b. 80: لا يدخل البيت الاّ لحاجة الانسان

3) i. e. al-Zuhrī.

4) جماعة

5) Mālik, *Iʿtikāf*, t. 2, 3. The words between brackets are from Zurḳānī's commentary.

6) Bukhārī, *Iʿtikāf*, b. 6; Muslim, *Iʿtikāf*, t. 6; Abū Dā'ūd, *Ṣawm*, b. 77; Nasā'ī, *Masādjid*, b. 18; Ibn Mādja, *Ṣiyām*, b. 59, 62; cf. Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal II, p. 67, 129.

observed that neither in any of these traditions nor anywhere else, as far as I know, the word for a common Beduin tent, *bait*, is used, but either خباء or قبّة. This means that Muhammad resided in a small tent, that was not made, as Beduin tents were and are, from the hair of camels, sheep or goats. It is expressly said by the commentators that the "خباء is a tent made from downs or wool, not from hair; it is pitched on two or three poles" [1]).

The traditions that mention the قبّة provide it with the epithet تركيّة, Turkish. At the time when canonical tradition originated, the Turks were to the Muslims a far-off nomadic people with which they had no intimate relations as yet. 'A Turkish tent' therefore means a tent such as the nomadic Turkish tribes inhabited, not a tent as the Arabs used it. Nawawī [2]) explains the expression by "a small tent made from لُبُود". The latter term is nearly equivalent to our 'felt', cloth made from compressed layers of wool or hair. In connection with the explanation of the foregoing tradition, here probably wool is meant.

Such tents appear to have been the usual abodes for those who practised *iʿtikāf*. Concerning ʿĀ'isha it is said that she performed *djiwār* on mount Thabīr in "a Turkish ḳubba" [3]).

I know of two traditions only that represent Muhammad as residing in a tabernacle, made from palm branches [4]). It is very difficult to make out whether they have any importance. As a matter of fact, reports deviating from the common tenour of tradition, are not to be neglected, as they often have conserved antique features that have been superseded by general custom.

IV

THE FIRST DECADE OF DHU 'L-ḤIDJDJA

Ramaḍān was originally the month of summer-heat, Dhu 'l-Ḥidjdja the month in which autumn began. It corresponded with the North-semitic Tishri, which among the Jews was and is a New-

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1) Ḳasṭallānī III, 502: خباء اى خيمة من وبر او صوف لا من شعر وهو على عمودين او ثلاثة. This is literally Suyūṭī's explanation, apud Nasā'ī, *Masādjid*, b. 18.

2) III, p. 125.

3) Bukhārī, *Ḥadjdj*, b. 64.

4) Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal II, p. 129; IV, 348 *bis*.

Year's month. It is, therefore, not fortuitous that the Arabic festival in Dhu 'l-Ḥidjdja, pilgrimage, shows some features which bear the stamp of New-Year's rites. With a view to the fact that Ramaḍān as well as Dhu 'l-Ḥidjdja were New-Year's periods in early Arabia, it is only natural to find some similarity between the rites observed in these sacred times. *Iḥrām* in Dhu 'l Ḥidjdja implies sexual abstinence just as *iʿtikāf*. Fasting in the first decade of Dhu 'l-Ḥidjdja is not obligatory; but it is *sunna* on the 10th of that month for those who do not partake of the rites in the *ḥaram*. As to fasting on the 9th there are several sets of traditions; one of these maintains that thereby the sins of the preceding and the following year are ransomed [1]). Here seems to be an allusion to the first decade of Dhu 'l-Ḥidjdja as the first of the year. This is also the case in some traditions dealing with fasting during this decade: there are no days on which worship is more beloved with Allah than the days of the decade; to fast one of its days has a value equal to a year's fasting [2]). Here is another feature common to the *ʿashr* of Ramaḍān and that of Dhu 'l-Ḥidjdja: in both periods good works have the same exceptional value [3]); no doubt this characteristic is due to their being New-Year's periods.

The similarity between these two periods appears further in their similar termination: both end with a festival, an *ʿīd*: *al-ʿīdāni* "the two festivals" means that of the 1st of Shawwāl and that of the 10th of Dhu 'l-Ḥidjdja. The night preceding each of these festivals is devoted to religion [4]).

It is not necessary to adduce evidence for the fact that the *ʿīd* on the 10th of Dhu 'l-Ḥidjdja was an institution of early Arabia. In the foregoing pages I have endeavoured to make it probable that Ramaḍān as a sacred period has a pre-muhammadan origin. This may also be maintained concerning the *ʿīd* which closed this month. Tradition tells us that Abyssinians used to perform a kind

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1) Ibn Mādja, *Ṣiyām*, b. 40: قال رسول الله انى احتسب على الله ان يكفّر والسنة التى قبله والتى بعده. Tirmidhī, *Ṣawm*, b. 46; Mālik, *Ḥadjdj*, t. 133; Muslim, *Ṣiyām*, t. 196.

2) Ibn Mādja, *Ṣiyām*, b. 39: ما من ايّام الدنيا ايّام احبّ الى الله سبحانه ان يتعبد له فيها من ايام العشر وان صيام يوم فيها ليعدل صيام سنة

3) For the last decade of Ramaḍān cf. Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal I, p. 224, 338 *sq.*; II, 75, 131 *sq.*

4) Nawawī ad Muslim, III, p. 131: اتفقوا على استحباب احياء ليلتى العيدين

of *fantasia* with their spears on the *ʿīd*: and singers were wonted to display their art on it. These characteristics are certainly not of muhammadan origin; they must go back to pagan times. It must be conceded that the 1st of Shawwāl is not expressly mentioned in these traditions; but that the two *ʿīd*'s are meant is to be concluded from the following tradition [1]): "The people of the *djāhilīya* had two days every year on which they performed plays. When the Apostle of Allāh came to Medina he said: Ye have two days on which ye perform plays; but Allāh has replaced them by what is better: the day of *fiṭr* and the day of *aḍḥā*".

The rites performed on the *ʿīd al-fiṭr* are much alike those of the *yawm al-aḍḥā*. Muhammad went to the *muṣallā* where he led the *ṣalāt* without the usual *adhān* and *iḳāma*; there followed a *khuṭba* which may have been simple enough. The only important difference between the two is this that on the *yawm al-aḍḥā* victims were and are slaughtered. This may be conceived of as an imitation of the rites performed on this day by the pilgrims at Minā and this would explain the fact that there are no sacrifices on the 1st of Shawwāl. Yet it is worth notice that according to Father Jaussen all the tribes in Moabitis, whether they fast Ramaḍān or not, slaughter sacrifices on this day. This custom may be a survival from pre-muhammedan times, when Ramaḍān was a season and not a lunar month.

However this be, there are traditions of greater importance concerning customs practised in the first decade of Dhu 'l-Ḥidjdja, which receive fresh light from the rites of *iʿtikāf* as discussed above. Usually these traditions are communicated in connection with sūra 2, 185: "Piety consisteth not therein that ye enter [your] houses through their roofs... but enter ye [your] houses through their doors". The common interpretation of the verse is this, that the Ḥums, when they were in the sacred state of *iḥrām* before *ḥadjdj* or *ʿumra*, used to enter their houses through an opening made in the roof [2]). This custom is evidently parallel to the avoiding of the house during *iʿtikāf*, the tabooing of the house. Sometimes it is ascribed to the Ḥums, a group of tribes residing chiefly in or near the *ḥaram* of Mekka, sometimes it seems to

1) Nasā'ī, *Idain*, b. 1.
2) Cf. the article *Ḥums* in the *Encyclopaedia of Islām* by Dr. C. van Arendonk.

be ascribed to the pagan Arabs in general [1]); sometimes it is mentioned in connection with the Anṣār at Medina [2]). This shows that tradition feels not sure as to who practised this rite; but usually it is ascribed to the Ḥums. Possibly the custom had once been a general one, but become obsolete among the Arabs, except the Ḥums.

It is further expressly said, just as in the case of *iʿtikāf*, that they avoided the roofs of their houses. "Some of the Anṣār, as soon as they had taken *iḥrām* for an *ʿumra*, avoided anything screening between heaven and themselves, because they feared harm from it. If such a man, after having left his house, was obliged to enter it for some necessity, he did not enter through the door of his dwelling, on account of the roof of the gate, which would have screened him from heaven" [3]).

A second remarkable rite in the *iḥrām* of the Ḥums was their dwelling in leather tents [4]). On account of the uncertainty mentioned above, as to who were the people who practised these peculiar rites of *iḥrām*, it is difficult to say, whether townspeople or Beduins are meant. Perhaps we are right in supposing that both classes of the population of Arabia are included. However this be, the importance of the rite surpasses the limits of this question. For it is said in plain words, just as in the case of *iʿtikāf*, that they dwelt, not in the common Beduin's tent, but in a leather *ḳubba*. Ṭabarī says: "It was not allowed to the Ḥums to enter a tent of hair, nor to take shelter against the sun except in leather tents, as long as they were *muḥrim*" [5]). And al-Rāzī: "When the Ḥums were *muḥrim*, they did not enter their houses at all, nor did they take shelter against the sun in tents made from down" [6]).

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1) e.g. Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr* II, 105: كانوا فى الجاهلية اذا احرموا اتوا البيوت من ظهورها

2) Azraḳī, p. 124[13]; Ṭabarī II, 105.

3) Ṭabarī II, 105: كان ناس من الانصار اذا اهلّوا بالعمرة لم يَحُلْ بينهم وبين السماء شىء يتحرّجون من ذلك وكان الرجل يخرج مهلّا بالعمرة فتبدو له الحاجة بعدما يخرج من بيته فيرجع ولا يدخل من باب الحجرة من اجل سقف الباب يحول بينه وبين السماء

4) Yaʿḳūbī, *Historiae*, ed. Houtsma, I, 297 *sq.*: ويسكنون فى حال نسكهم قباب الادم

5) *Tafsīr* II, 164 (parallel to Azraḳī, p. 121). لا ينبغى للحمس ان ... ولا يدخلوا بيتا من شعر ولا يستظلوا ان يستظلوا الّا فى بيوت الادم ما كانوا حُرُمًا

6) I, 678: وهولاء متى احرموا لم يدخلوا بيوتهم البتة ولا يستظلون الوبر

What does it mean, that during *iʿtikāf* as well as during *iḥrām* people not only avoided their houses, but also the common tent of hair? For an answer on this question I refer to the brilliant study by Father Lammens on stone-worship in early Arabia [1]). Lammens has pointed to the religious character of the tent of red leather, the receptacle of the stone idols of the tribe. In an archaic period leather is an article of the highest importance, because metal utensils are not yet known to the Beduins. Religion as usually has clung to archaic forms; this explains why the tent used for religious purposes has always remained the leather tent [2]). This might explain why the Ḥums passed their *iḥrām* in tents made from this stuff. It might also explain why the common Beduin's tent, made of hair, was not used during *iʿtikāf*. Yet the rites of *iʿtikāf* in this respect were not so archaic as those of *iḥrām*, for Muhammad uses a woollen or felt tent. One is tempted to conclude from the facts mentioned that tents of wool, down or felt are more archaic than those of hair. If this conclusion should be true, there would have been three periods in the construction of tents: the archaic one in which they were covered with leather; the second in which wool, down or felt was used for that purpose; the third in which goat's or camel's hair prevailed.

But we have also to take into consideration the other rites practised by the Ḥums. They neither prepared nor ate sour milk nor butter [3]). This means that they kept the milk of the flocks in its natural state; it is also said that they left it to the young animals. It is clear that this abstinence rises from the belief that the fecundity and the prospering of the flocks would be enhanced by man's using the milk in the ordinary way. Such beliefs are of frequent occurrence. Father Jaussen has observed, that the Moab Beduins abstain from the use of milk and butter in spring, till these products have been offered to a *walī* [4]). A similar belief lies at the bottom of the Biblical prohibition of the kid in its

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1) *Le culte des bétyles et les processions religieuses chez les Arabes préislamites* (*Bulletin de l'institut français d'archéologie orientale*, t. XVII, p. 39—101).

2) *o.c.* p. 61.

3) Ṭabarī II, 164: لا ينبغى للحمس ان يقطوا الاقط ولا يسلوا السمن وهم حرم؛ Rāzī I, 678: ولا ياكلون السمن والاقط

4) *Coutumes des Arabes du pays de Moab*, p. 364 *sq.*

mother's milk, as has been pointed out at the hand of copious materials by Sir J. G. Frazer [1]).

It is clear that in the case of the Ḥums, just as in the case of the Moabite Beduins, this kind of abstinence must have been practised in spring. This implies a difficulty. It is true, in Muhammad's time, the *ḥadjdj* had turned round to spring. But originally this festival belonged to autumn. Consequently we must conjecture either that Muslim tradition describes a custom which cannot from of old have belonged to the *ḥadjdj*; or, that on the contrary, the custom is old; but then it must have belonged to the spring-festival which took place in Radjab.

I do not see which part of the alternative has to be preferred to the other. At any rate the custom as such is not an invention of traditionists; this is proved by the parallels mentioned. It is certainly a custom belonging to the New-Year's rites of spring. We shall discuss some more parallels in a following chapter, parallels that are also New-Year's or season customs.

It is further said that the Ḥums during their *iḥrām* put on new garments which were neither of wool nor of hair [2]). This feature has naturally to be connected with the fact, that the Ḥums during their *iḥrām* did not dwell in tents of hair or wool. Apparently they did not only consider the milk of their flocks taboo, but also the objects made from their hair. This conclusion is of a nature to show the variety and the complexity of the motives lying at the bottom of several taboo's connected with *iʿtikāf* and *iḥrām*; it shows also that we are not able to distinguish sharply between the spheres within which these taboo's were practised. As far as I see we must content ourselves with the rites as such.

But we must return to the taboo of the house. It not only occurs as a New-Year's rite, but also as a vow; it is true, in this case the term taboo is not adequate, but at any rate it occurred as a rite: "When a man in pagan times aimed at something, and there presented itself a difficulty so that he could not reach his aim, he did not enter his house through the door, but from the back; and he kept to this rule a whole year" [3]). Evidently this

1) *Folk-lore in the Old Testament*, III, 111 *sqq.*

2) *Encyclopaedia of Islām*, art. *Ḥums* by C. van Arendonk; Yaʿḳūbī, ed. Houtsma, I, 297[18].

3) al-Rāzī I, 677: قال الحسن والاصمّ كان الرجل فى الجاهلية اذا همّ بشىء فتعسر عليه مطلوبه لم يدخل بيته من بابه بل يأتيه من خلفه ويبقى على هذه الحالة حولا كاملا

abstinence was a vow in order to commove the gods to grant the thing aimed at. It is nothing strange to find rites of abstinence also under the category of vows. We have observed this already regarding *iᶜtikāf*, the taboo of the house, which occurred in pagan times as a vow. Other vows of this kind occurred among the Semitic tribes. Some of ᶜUthmān's adherents made the vow that they would not sleep on their beds ere they had taken vengeance for the murdered caliph [1]). How closely the taboo of the house and that of the bed are related to one another appears from David's vow that the would "neither enter the tent of his house, nor ascend his bed" ere he should have found a resting-place for Yahwe [2]). The example of David reminds us of Uria's behaviour who, when he returned from the army to Jerusalem, pertinently refused to enter his house and to sleep with his wife [3]). Here appears the sexual taboo combined with the taboo of the house. It is only strange that David does not seem to have foreseen an abstinence which must have been common among those who were in the state of holy warriors.

A peculiar case of taboo of the house is mentioned by Ṭabarī [4]). When one of the inhabitants of Medina feared evil on the part of an adversary, he assumed *iḥrām* which made him inviolable, but obliged him to enter his house through its roof. Perhaps this was the usual religious *iḥrām* which indeed secured those who assumed it, against hostilities. But it is not impossible to consider it as the *iḥrām* of warriors, who may also have been considered as being inviolable on the part of their own tribespeople. This question is not easily to be answered, especially because religious *iḥrām* and that of the warrior were of the same nature [5]). We found [6]) an example of this identity in the expression شدّ مئزره which is used for sexual abstinence during *iᶜtikāf* as well as during war. This fact leads us to a discussion of the meaning of the term Ḥums. C. van Arendonk in his article in the *Encyclopaedia of Islām* says that it is obscure; that according to Wellhausen the meaning of the opposite, *Ḥilla* (profane), seems to point to

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1) Ibn al-Athīr III, 229 as cited by W. Gottschalk, *Das Gelübde*, p. 141.
2) Psalm 132, 3: .... אם אבוא באהל ביתי אם אעלה על ערש יצועי
3) 2 Sam. 11, 9—13.
4) II, 106.
5) Cf. Schwally, *Semitische Kriegsaltertümer* (Leipzig, 1901); W. Gottschalk, *o. c.*
6) Above, p. 14 *sq.*

something like "sacred"; that Nöldeke preferring a semasiological connection with the root *ḥ-m-s* is inclined to think of the meaning hot or fervent.

These doubtful explanations would perhaps seem justified, if the common meaning of the term were unknown or impossible. But this is not the case. *Ḥums* is a regular plural of *aḥmas* and *aḥmas* is an epithet of the warrior; cf. *Lisān*, s. v.: ورجل حَمِسٌ وحَمِيسٌ وأَحْمَسُ شجاع, i. e. valiant and prepared for war. It is consequently synonymous with the Hebrew חָמוּשׁ which occurs four times in its plural form חמושים in the Old Testament, once [1]) with the variant חמישים which is literally identical with the form حَمِيس as communicated by the *Lisān* [2]).

Our conclusion is this: certain tribes which clung to very old customs in their *iḥrām*, received on account of this peculiar feature the epithet of "the strenuous", "the warlike". This is only possible if there existed a strong likeness between the religious and the martial *iḥrām*. So the attitude of the Ḥums during *iḥrām* may be compared with the "the fastening of the *izār*" during *iʿtikāf*. The rite of *iʿtikāf* is a kind of *iḥrām* as well and we are entitled to say that at least two seasons, viz. summer and autumn, in early Arabia were inaugurated by an *iḥrām*; probably spring also, for in spring the *ʿumra* of Radjab took place which still in Islām necessitates people to assume the *iḥrām*.

The likeness between or the identity of religious and martial *iḥrām* asks for a short discussion. W. Gottschalk in his book on vows in early Arabia has paid attention to the religious nature of war [3]). According to him the historical development of *iḥrām* is the following. Religious *iḥrām* has its origin in martial *iḥrām*; or better: "das Kriegsgelübde ist älter als der *iḥrām*". This means that the *iḥrām* of the warrior is really a state that is due to the warrior's vow to abstain from certain things "um sich zur schnellen Vollziehung der Rache anzustacheln" [4]). He even thinks that some rites of religious *iḥrām* are absurd as religious rites

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1) In the Samaritan text of Ex. 13, 18.

2) Gesenius-Buhl is therefore wrong in comparing חמוש with Arabic خميس "army". If the meaning of حميس and احمس were incertain, حماسة would be a sufficient proof.

3) p. 144 *sqq.*

4) p. 147.

and can only be explained "durch eine mechanische Übernahme älterer Bräuche" [1]). It is further his opinion that the avoiding of the tent of hair, as practised by the Ḥums, is of the same nature as the prohibition to cut hair and nails during *iḥrām*, viz. a hair-taboo due to a vow.

This explanation is open to doubt. We have seen that the custom of the Ḥums to abstain from butter and sour milk and to avoid tents of hair goes back to the belief that in some seasons the use of these animal products would enhance the prospering of the flocks. This is consequently no taboo due to a vow, but one of the many taboos so well known in nomadic and agricultural societies. Probably the use of unleavened bread during the feast of *Maṣṣot* is based on similar conceptions [2]).

As to the relation between religious and martial *iḥrām*, it is surely not allowed to prove the former's dependency upon the latter by the argument that the neglect of the outward appearance is an element foreign to religion. In a special study of this point [3]) I have given some examples of this rite in religion. Likewise religious sexual taboo has not been taken over from the sexual taboo of warriors. The domain of sex and its workings as such is in opposition to religion in many primitive societies. Here lies the root of the sexual taboo of warriors; for war was of a religious nature. It would take us too far to treat all these points in the way they deserve; our short discussion may be sufficient to show that their explanation is not so easy as it might appear on account of Gottschalk's *aperçu*'s in his valuable book on vows.

V

THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES

A comparison between *iʿtikāf* and *iḥrām* on the one hand and the feast of Tabernacles on the other, may seem strange at the first sight, because the two former states prescribe several kinds of penible abstinence, whereas the latter is reputed to be a real feast.

1) p. 148.

2) Cf. B. D. Eerdmans, in *Nöldeke-Festschrift*, p. 671 *sqq.*

3) *Some Semitic rites of mourning and religion* (*Verhandelingen der Kon. Akad. v. Wetenschappen*, Deel XVIII, n° 1, p. 50 *sqq.*).

But we have to keep in mind that the Jewish festivals in Tishri implied also the great mourning-day on the 10th and we shall endeavour to show that the feast of Tabernacles may also be viewed from a side different from the usual one and at the outset we will remind the reader of a passage in *The Religion of the Semites* [1]) in which Robertson Smith has tentatively traced back the customs of the Ḥums and the dwelling in tabernacles to the same root, viz. the taboo of the house.

As is well known the feast of Tabernacles is denoted in three ways in the Old Testament: the feast of gathering [2]) (חג האסיף), the feast of Tabernacles [3]) (חג הסוכות), and simply the feast. Of these three denominations the last points to the importance of the festival, the first to its being the time of the harvest of wine and fruits, the second to the dwelling in tents. The common view finds no difficulty in combining the latter two characteristics.

It conceives of the people's dwelling in tabernacles (*sukkot*) during the feast no an imitation of their dwelling in huts which are said to have been erected in the vineyards with a view to wine-harvest [4]). I must confess that the nearly universal belief in this explanation is somewhat startling to me. Is it certain, we may ask, that people used to dwell in huts or tents in the vineyards during the wine-harvest? The custom is never mentioned in the Old Testament, though Is. 1, 8 is adduced as a reference: "And the daughter of Zion is left as a cottage in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers, as a besieged city" [5]). It can hardly be understood, how this passage should contain any evidence in favour of the custom which it is supposed to illustrate. The prophet speaks of the nocturnal shelter of the guardian in the garden of cucumbers, of a besieged city and of a hut in the vineyard, three images of utter isolation and loneliness; how can one of them at the same time be an illustration of the jubilant joy of wine-harvest?

In the second place modern Palestinian usages are adduced in favour of the explanation just mentioned. Nowack in his *Archaeologie* [6]) refers to Robinson, *Palästina und die südlich angren-*

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1) p. 333 *sq.* 2) Ex. 23, 16. 3) Lev. 24, 34.

4) Benzinger, *Hebr. Archäologie*[2] p. 395 has given up this view in favour of a Babylonian explanation.

5) ונותרה בת־ציון כסכה בכרם כמלונה במקשה כעיר נצורה

6) II, 155.

zenden Länder [1]). It may be useful to copy the two passages which interest us.

The first is dated April 14 [2]): "Die Gegend um Hebron ist überreich an Weingärten und die Trauben sind die schönsten in Palästina. Jeder Weingarten hat ein kleines Haus oder ein Türmchen von Stein, das den Hütern zur Behausung dient, und man sagte uns, dass während der Weinlese die Einwohner von Hebron hinausgingen und in diesen Häusern wohnten, so dass die Stadt beinahe verlassen sei."

We remark that Robinson was at Hebron in April so that he could not observe the custom himself; that he perceived small houses or towers which in the first place were destined for the guardians and were also used by the inhabitants of the town in harvest time.

The second report is dated May 24 [3]): "Die Weinlese ist für Alle eine Zeit der Lust und Freude. Die Stadt wird verlassen und die Leute leben in den Weingärten in Hütten und Zelten."

We remark that also this time Robinson visited Hebron in spring without being able to observe harvest customs himself; that the houses and towers mentioned in the first report have been modelled after the Biblical fashion and have become "Hütten und Zelte". This proves with how great suspicion Biblical parallels even in works of so eminent merits as Robinson's, have to be examined.

It may be sufficient to state that Robinson's report is not of a nature to explain the Biblical term *ḥag hassukkot*, nor the Mishnic precepts which will be discussed later.

It may further be asked: if people were accustomed to dwell in huts in their vineyards during the wine harvest, would this custom be a basis solid enough to account for the Mishnic commandment that people must dwell in tabernacles during the festival? Religious rites are not very likely to find their explanation in historical events or customs unless these customs themselves should be based on popular belief. The current explanation of the rite in question seems therefore *a priori* inadequate. But let us now consider what tradition and law tell us concerning the character of the festival and concerning the tabernacles.

It is generally admitted that the term חג האסיף "feast of

1) Halle 1841, 3 vols. 2) I, 354. 3) II, 717 *sq.*

gathering", as illustrated by some passages in the Old Testament [1]), denotes the religious celebration of wine and olive harvest, and that the festival (as is illustrated by the term "the festival") is the conclusion of the whole agricultural year.

This apperception seems not open to reasonable doubt. But it does not account for other features, and is therefore not sufficient. In Zecharja XIV, 16 *sq.* it is said that the remainder of the peoples will come from year to year to Jerusalem in order to worship Yahwe Ṣebaot and to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles. "And those tribes that will not come up unto Jerusalem in order to worship the king Jahwe Ṣebaot, upon them shall be no rain" [2]). This proves that the feast was not only the religious celebration of the harvest that had taken place or took place at the same time, but that it was celebrated with a view to future agricultural events, viz. rain and the prospering of the coming harvest. This notion explains the rite of the water libation which took place on the feast with great pomp and which, accordingly, is a rite of sympathetic magic, that probably has left a trace in the name of the 8th Dhu 'l-Ḥidjdja, يوم التروية "day of watering". In the *Mishna* it is said that "judgment with a view to water takes places on the feast" [3]); this means that on it God determines the amount of rain for the coming season.

The twofold character of the feast being very clear, it may be asked to what part other ceremonies belonged. It is said in the *Mishna*: "They brought palm branches, with which they beat the bottom at the sides of the altar, after which this day was called "the day of the beating of branches" [4]). This beating of the earth with branches is certainly also a rite of sympathetic magic and as such to be put on a level with the thyrsos staff and the custom to beat people with branches, which occurred in some parts of Europe [5]).

There was another rite on the feast which bore the same character. During the procession around the altar, at whose sides willow branches were planted, the priests sang [6]): "Save now, I

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1) Judges 9, 42; 21, 19 *sq.*
2) 10, 17: והיה אשר לא יעלה ..... ולא עליהם יהיה הגשם
3) *Rosh Hashshana* I, 2: ובחג נידונין על המים
4) Sukka IV, 6: חריות של דקל היו מביאין וחובטין אותן בקרקע בצידי המזבח ואותו היום נקרא יום חבוט חריות
5) Mannhardt, *Wald- und Feldkulte*², p. 251 *sqq.*
6) Psalms 118, 25.

beseech thee, O Lord: O Lord, I beseech thee, send now prosperity". This is not a hymn of thanks-givings but an imploration of divine help. Probably the procession with *lulab* and *etrog* has to be viewed in the same light.

Finally it must be said that among the Jews in Europe there has been conserved a custom which shows the closest resemblance with the practice of the Muslims in the nights of Ramaḍān [1]). Bodenschatz describes it as follows: "Einige versammlen sich in der Synagog, oder auch in ihren Hütten, und beten die ganze Nacht hindurch, lesen Psalmen, Mischnajoth, oder auch in der Bibel" [2]). This is the Jewish *tarāwīḥ*. That this rite is practised with a view to the heavenly decrees which are fixed in this night, appears from another custom which is also described by Bodenschatz [3]): "Auch haben sie in dieser Nacht sehr viele wunderliche Gebräuche und Fabelwerk. Denn manche gehen hinaus auf die Gasse, beachten ihren Schatten beim Mondschein, auf folgende Art: Sie nehmen ein Leilach um den blosen Leib, und wenn sie auf die Gasse kommen, werfen sie solches Leilach von sich, dass sie ganz nackend da stehen, alsdann spreisen sie ihre Hände und Füsse auseinander, und sehen dabei auf ihren Schatten. Mangelt ihnen der Kopf, so sagen und glauben sie, sie müssen in diesem Jahr selbst sterben, mangelt ihnen ein Finger, so glauben sie, es treffe der Tod einen von ihren Anverwandten" etc.

All this proves clearly that the feast of tabernacles is not only a feast of thanks-givings for the harvest, but also a time in which the decision of coming events was believed to be fixed. This state of things imposes the question: to which set of ideas did the chief characteristic of the feast, the dwelling in tabernacles belong? In order to be able to answer this question, we must know what the tabernacles are.

Their common denomination סכות does not shed sufficient light on this question; neither does its Greek rendering σκηνοπηγία. As far as I see the Hebrew word for tent, אהל, is never used in this connection. On the other hand it is to be borne in mind that in 2 Sam. 11, 11 סכה denotes the tents in which warriors and the ark resided during a campaign. Still more remarkable is Lev. 22, 43 where the feast is not called an imitation of harvest-customs, but a memorial of Israel's dwelling in tents during their abode in the

1) See above, p. 13. 2) II, 242. 3) *ib.*

desert. This is certainly not an historical explanation; but the passage proves that to the Jewish mind the *sukkot* of the feast were connected with a notion of tents.

There is one passage giving a detailed description of the way in which the feast was celebrated, viz. Nehemia 8, 14—16: "And they found written in the law, . . . that . . . and that they should publish and proclaim in all their cities, and in Jerusalem, saying, Go forth unto the mount, and fetch olive branches and branches of the *ʿeṣ shemen*, and myrtle branches and palm branches and branches of thick trees, to make booths, as it is written. So the people wenth forth, and brought them, and made themselves booths, every one upon the roof of his house, and in their courts and in the courts of the house of God, and in the place of the water gate, and in the place of the gate of Ephraim".

This passage contains two points of interest for our present purpose: it tells us what the tabernacles were made of and where they were erected. We shall consider them one after another.

The tabernacles which the book of Nehemia describes are real "Loofhutten, Laubhütten". The reference to Lev. 23, 40 however (this passage is certainly meant by "as it is written") is open to exegetical objections. For here it is only said that people must take the branches on the first day without any mention of their use. It may be supposed that this precept refers to rites such as the procession with *lulab* and *etrog*, the planting of willow-branches etc. This exegesis is recommended by the words "on the first day"; for it would be strange if the tabernacles should be erected on the first day of the feast. Consequently Lev. 23, 40 does not teach us anything concerning the form of the tabernacles in the author's time. Their first description occurs in Neh. 8, 14—16 and it informs us as to what kind of booths the post-exilic reformers had in view. This same type of booths, the real "loofhut", does not occur in Nehemia only: it is the type which the Karaites used [1]).

This is also the type which resembles the Egyptian tabernacles as described by W. B. Kristensen [2]).

The Rabbanitic Jews on the other hand did not limit the materials from which tabernacles should be made, to the species

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1) Cf. Dachs, *Codex Succa*, p. 44 *sqq.*; *Jewish Encyclopaedia*, s. v. *Tabernacles.*

2) *De Loofhut en het Loofhuttenfeest in den egyptischen cultus* in *Meded. Kon. Akad. v. Wetenschappen*, Deel 56, serie B, n° 6.

mentioned in the book of Nehemia. According to the *Mishna* and later authorities they must contain three walls and may be covered with all that grows in the earth, has been extracted, and is not liable to putrefaction or defilement [1]).

This rule leaves room for quite a different type of tabernacles, from which all the characteristics described in Nehemia are absent. It is perfectly well known, for it is just the kind that is used by the Jews up to the present day. At Amsterdam e. g. the tabernacles are usually in the courts and gardens belonging to the Jews' private houses. They consist of three wooden walls and are generally covered with reed. Within are hung various kinds of ornaments from coloured paper, spar green etc.; but apparently they are not of essential significance.

It is clear that this is a kind of tabernacles altogether different from the one described above [2]).

We have now to discuss the second question. The passage in Neh. 8 relates that tabernacles were erected on the roofs of houses, in the courts of houses and of the temple and in the streets. It is not difficult to see that this means that the house as well as places provided with a roof were to be avoided.

These two features occur also in the legal precepts concerning tabernacles: during the seven days of the feast the booths have taken the place of the house, so that the latter may only be entered in case of necessity [3]). Bodenschatz even adds, that the Jews, when they have to go out of their tabernacles, are very shy, as if they do not want to be seen [4]).

The prohibition to enter under a roof is even extended to the tabernacles themselves; for they may not have a covering through which the stars cannot be seen [5]). It is possible that this rule was made with a view to those Jews who erected their tabernacles within their houses and removed a part of the roof. But it is certain that it is applied to all tabernacles and it bears a remarkable resemblance to one of the rules of the Ḥums, according to which they had to avoid during their *iḥrām* everything screening between the sky and themselves.

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1) *Sukka* I, 1, 4; Maimonides, *Mishne Tora*, *Hilkot Shofar* § 5, 1.

2) I am indebted for these particulars to the kindness of Prof. Dr. J. L. Palache.

3) *Sukka*, II, 9: כל שבעת הימים אדם עושה סוכתו קבע וביתו עראי Cf. *Sukka*, fol. 2*a*, 21*b*.

4) *o. l.*, II, 237. 5) Maimonides, *o. c.*, fol. 170*a*.

On the other hand the Jewish tabernacles have to be built in order to protect their inhabitants against the sun; in *Mishna* and *Talmud* it is ordered, that they must be places of shadow [1]). So they are a protection against the sun, but may not form a screen against it.

It is difficult to group all these data in a logical or even in a synoptic way. But we may at least state a few facts as the results of our section on tabernacles:

The feast of tabernacles presents two main features, one distinct from the other. On the one hand it is the feast of harvest and of thanks-givings for harvest and vegetation.

On the other hand it is the festival on which the fate of the coming harvest, which chiefly depends on the rainfall in autumn, is decided.

Further the celebration of the feast is characterised by the use of two distict types of booths:

1° The real "loofhut", "Laubhütte", which was composed from several kinds of leafy branches, symbols of vegetation.

2° The tent which does not show any special connection with vegetation or harvest, but seems merely to be meant as a temporary dwelling-place because of the house being taboo.

It cannot be said with certainty that the two sets of ideas which are represented in the feast are historically connected each with one of the types of tabernacles. But it cannot be denied that to the former type of the festival belongs the former type of tabernacle. The latter type of the festival may also be associated with the real "loofhut" in so far as its use may be an act of sympathetic magic, just as the procession with *lulab* and *etrog*, and the planting of the willow branches are rites of sympathetic magic. The intrinsic connection of the latter type of the festival with the latter type of tabernacle has to be discussed together with the meaning of the taboo of the house, as this type of tabernacle seems to be evolved from such a conception. We shall perhaps be better equipped for such a discussion, if we first cast a glance on similar phenomena in and out with the semitic world.

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1) *Sukka* I, 1; *Sukka*, fol. 8*b*.

VI

THE TABOO OF THE HOUSE

I'tikāf, *ḥadjidj* and the Feast of Tabernacles appeared to be intimately connected with summer and autumn. Midsummer and winter customs are of a nature to shed light on the phenomena discussed above. They have been described by Westermarck [1]).

We shall relate some features communicated by him. Several kinds of cereals are cooked and eaten in their natural state with the husks on. The object of this ceremony is to secure good crops. We meet in North-Africa with the same belief which in other countries is attached to the *lailat al-ḳadr*. "At midsummer for one hour, the water of the sea becomes sweet, whilst the water of springs and rivers becomes salt". Possibly this belief has been taken over from the Muslims and fixed at the night in which summer begins. But it is also possible that this belief was autochthonous in North-Africa as well as in other parts of the world.

Another well known practice at the *Anṣara*-festival is the kindling of bonfires in order to bring about fertility [2]). We find the same custom at the autumn-festival in the Semitic world: at the *ḥadjidj* and at the Feast of Tabernacles [3]).

These customs do not go hand in hand with a taboo of the house. But there is a peculiar rite which is certainly consanguineous with it. A certain tribe in midsummer "burn a tent which has belonged to somebody killed in warfare, during a feast, or, if there be no such person in the village, the tent of the fkî or schoolmaster. Both among the Běni Mgild and among the Zemmur the burned tent is replaced by a new one. Among the Arabic-speaking Běni Ahsen it is the custom for those who live near the river Sbû to make a little hut of straw at midsummer, set light to it, and let it float down the river. The people of Salli burn a straw hut on the river" [4]). In other places they burn the tent of a widow who has never given birth to a child [5]).

I am not able to "explain" all these characteristics. But, a comparison between the burning of a tent in midsummer and the taboo of the house in midsummer and autumn, authorizes us to

1) *Midsummer customs in Morocco* (*Folklore*, XVI, 27 *sqq.*).
2) p. 28 *sqq.* 3) *Acta Orientalia*, I, p. 162. 4) p. 31. 5) *ib.*

conjecture that the burning of the tent and the taboo of the house have both the aim to protect man, at those critical periods, against the evil powers which are present in the usual dwelling-places.

We shall confront this conjecture with fresh material, borrowed from the same country, viz. the rites of the Ennayerfeast which is celebrated on New-Year's day of the Julian Calendar [1]). The characteristics which are of importance for our enquiry are the following. It is a real New-Year's feast and it is celebrated with rites aiming at fertility, just as the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the *iḥrām* of the Ḥums and the Feast of Tabernacles. In the first place we consider from this point of view the custom "to strew green twigs on the flat roofs of the houses, on the stalks and on the floors of the tents, on the day before Ennayer, so that the new year may be green", i. e. lucky; cf. the procession with the *lulab* and *etrog* and of the planting of willow-branches, on the Feast of Tabernacles and the first type of the "Loofhut" as described above.

In the second place there are peculiar customs concerning food. "In various places milk only is drunk or dry vegetables such as wheat, beans or chick-peas, cooked in water eaten". And: "The housewife places a scorpion below the vessel in which the milk is to curdle in order to obtain as much butter as possible". We have observed, that the Ḥums also practised various customs concerning milk in the days of their *iḥrām*. It seems as if the fertility which is aimed at, is brought about in two divergent ways: on the one hand (as it was the custom among the Ḥums), people refrain from all milk except in its natural state; on the other hand (as in North-Africa) butter is prepared as a rite of sympathetic magic.

Even the fact that the Ḥums avoided tents of hair and the spinning of wool during their *iḥrām* [2]) has its counterpart in North-Africa: "mats, carpets or burnuses in process of manufacture are wound round the beams of the loom or put out of the way during the festival".

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1) A description of the feast is given by E. Destaing in the *Encyclopaedia of Islām*, s. v. *Ennayer*.

2) Azraḳī, 123[12]: فلم تكن نساءهم ينسجن ولا يغزلن الشعر ولا يسلئن السمن اذا احرموا

In the third place we find customs connected with the taboo of the house. "In Laghuat and Géryville and among many Berber tribes, the ashes are swept from the hearth, new stones placed in it and sometimes a new *Ḳānūn* is dug in another place in the room; it is further the custom to replace an old article of furniture by a new one and put it in another position".

This brings us again to the taboo of the house and to the rites protecting man against the dangers lurking in houses and tents at certain times. This is especially the case when someone has died in the house, as is known from the Old Testament. According to Numbers 19 a tent was defiled when some one died in it and it had to be sprinkled with the sacred water in order to become pure again; the same rite had to be performed unto any one who entered such a defiled tent.

The nefarious influence of the dead on the tent or the house where they died is feared among various tribes and peoples. Sometimes the house is abandoned, sometimes the encampment is broken up, sometimes a new entrance is made in a house, in order to avoid the evil consequences of defilement [1]).

It is however not only the dead who cause danger to those who survive in a house; all kinds of demons may lurk in the corners. Semitic scholars are familiar with the incantation bowls provenient from Mesopotamia, bearing Aramaic inscriptions serving to avert danger on the part of demons whose names are expressly mentioned [2]).

Another kind of averrunculum are signs and marks scratched on doors [3]), lintels etc. Apparently they serve as amulets against dangers coming from without. So it is to be understood, when the Moabite Beduins besmear the entrance, the *ruag* [4]) and the tentpole with blood when they pitch a new tent, when a tent is made to cover a larger area than it did before or when the *ruag* (a kind of mat as a shelter against the wind) is applied to a different side of the tent [5]).

It is said by the Beduins themselves that this rite is practised, because houses and tents are the property of *djinn's* [6]).

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1) Copious material in Frazer, *Folk-lore in the Old Testament*, III, 232 *sqq.*; cf. also G. A. Wilken, *Verspreide Geschriften*, I, 56; III, 113.

2) J. A. Montgomery, *Aramaic incantation bowls* (*Publications of the Pennsylvania Museum*).

3) Wilken, *o. c.*, III, 404.

4) رواق

5) Jaussen, *o. c.*, p. 339 *sq.*

6) Jaussen, p. 343.

But for our purpose it is more important to observe such apotropaic rites in the critical periods of the year. Heiler in his book on Catholicism says concerning the Catholic peasants in Germany: "Das Volk pflegt mit den am Feste der heiligen drei Könige geweihten Rauchkörnern die Räume des Hauses "auszuräuchern" und die Türen mit den zauberhaft aussehenden Zeichen C + M + B (Caspar, Melchior und Balthasar) anzukreiden, um so die Wohn- und Stallräume gegen böse Geister zu sichern" [1]).

Ezekiel has a passage on the subject, which deserves attention: "In the first month, in the first day of the month, thou shalt take a young bullock without blemish, and cleanse the sanctuary. And the priest shall take of the blood of the sin offering, and put it upon the posts of the house, and upon the four corners of the settle of the altar and upon the posts of the gate of the inner court. And so thou shalt do the seventh day of the month for every one that erreth, and for him that is simple: so shall ye reconcile the house" [2]).

If even the house of God wanted such apotropaic rites, should man be able to guard his house without them? This would be impossible. Everyone knows that the law for Passover in Exodus 12, 7 and 13, 23, prescribes the smearing of the lamb's blood "on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses..... And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt". — The words "to destroy you" which I have taken from the authorized Version do not render justice to the Hebrew למשחית, which is usually considered as the personification of the plague, an angel of death or some kindred conception. This appears more clearly from verse 23: "And when he seeth the blood upon the lintel and on the two side posts, the Lord will pass over the door, and will not suffer the destroyer to come into your houses to smite you". In these passages it is expressly said that the bloody tokens on the door-posts had an apotropaic power [3]).

This happened in one of the nights of spring, and this night

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1) B. Heiler, *Der Katholizismus*, p. 73. 2) 45, 18—20.

3) Cf. the Muhammadan conception, that in one night of the year the plague (*wabāʾ*) visits all vessels and enters those which are uncovered (Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, III, 355).

is called a "night of waking for Yahwe" [1]). This is consequently another Israelitic ليلة التراويح. What do these terms mean? Such nights of watching occur among several peoples [2]) on several occasions, but chiefly at critical times when evil influences are feared for sleeping man. We shall not be far amiss when we suppose that waking in the night of Passover and in the Night of the Decree was considered in the same way. If this be true, we have to ask whether the Muslim explanation of the term ليلة التراويح is right. It is said that it means the pauses between the sets of *rakʿa*'s which are prayed in this night [3]). But روح II means "to give rest", "to appease" and the like, and this meaning suits precisely the purpose of waking in this critical night, viz. to appease the superhuman powers which are able to destroy man's life and health, or to cancel his name from the book of life.

Muslim tradition has preserved an expression which deserves special attention in connection with the Israelitic Passover.

We have mentioned it before: in the night before the 15th of Shaʿbān تنفسخ الاحياء من الأموات "a separation is made between the living and the dead". فسخ corresponds exactly to פסח, and פֶּסַח would consequently mean the heavenly decision which in the night of spring is taken with regard to man, his fate and his supply of food. It is to be remembered that the meanings of separating and of deciding are often connected with the same etymon [4]); and finally, that even in the *Mishna* Passover is considered, not only as the feast of harvest, but also as the epoch at which the fate of the coming harvest was decided. This idea brings about a complete parallelism to the Feast of Tabernacles which also partook of this double character [5]) and which also gave rise to the belief that houses had to be guarded from evil powers. We are no longer able to decide why in spring the sprinkling of blood on the doorposts was deemed sufficient, whereas in autumn houses had to be left by their inhabitants. At any rate we have found that a kind of taboo of the house was practised by the Israelites and by the Arabs in several critical periods of the year.

At the end of our enquiry we come back again [6]) to Robertson

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1) ליל שִׁמֻּרִים

2) Cf. *Some Semitic rites of mourning and religion*, Ch. IV.

3) See above, p. 13.

4) قضى, נזר, ܦܨܚ, etc.

5) See above, p. 28.

6) Cf. above, p. 26.

Smith's passage on the taboo during the Feast of Tabernacles. According to him this taboo may be viewed from two points: it may have been a preservation of *muḥrim*'s from the impurity of house and bed; or it may have aimed at preserving house and bed from the holiness of *muḥrim*'s.

Apparently however some more motives are possible. The sacrifices in the temple in the first month, and the besmearing of its doorposts with blood were not based on either of the views mentioned by Robertson Smith, but on the conception that at the beginning of this season the temple had to be guarded from evil influences, which were feared just then. If these influences were feared for the temple, how much more will they have been feared for common houses and tents. It may be called certain that the conception mentioned has possessed a preponderating [1]) influence on the genesis of the rites of Passover, Tabernacles, Ramaḍān and Dhu 'l-Ḥidjdja.

If so much should be conceded, we may go one step further. Man who leaves his house at those critical periods will naturally try to elude the higher powers which endanger his house and his life. So he may take the attitude of having no house or dwelling-place at all, as the Ḥums, the Jews and the *Muʿtakif* did, who suffered no roof above their head; or he may hide himself as the German Jews did, according to Bodenschatz. He may even change his usual clothes and assume the *iḥrām*, which from this point of view — again: not the only one — is an elusive dress [2]). He may also have recourse to rites of atonement, to fasting, ritual prayer, recitation of holy texts. With a view to the coming harvest he may take to several kinds of taboos, to changing his usual diet, to unleavened bread, to abstaining from cream and butter, to rites expected to effectuate fertility etc.

On the other hand some of the critical points of the year are feasts of thanks-givings, such as those in autumn and spring and they therefore partake of the nature of such festivals.

These two points of view may account for the double character of some of the Semitic feasts.

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1) I am anxious to remind the reader another time of the plurality of motives, reasons, feelings etc. which underly nearly every rite.

2) Cf. *Some Semitic rites of mourning and religion*, Chapter VIII.

APPENDIX

DECADES AND PENTADES

In the course of our enquiry we found several instances of rites which were practised or of festivals which were celebrated during a series of ten days. We shall enumerate them shortly here.

Muhammad's *iʿtikāf* is usually limited to one of the three decades of Ramaḍān.

The *lailat al-Ḳadr* is not fixed at one particular night; but a widely spread opinion connects it with one of the odd nights of the last decade of Ramaḍān.

The great festival in Arabia is, as a matter of fact, encompassed by the first appearance of the new moon in Dhu 'l-Ḥidjdja and the slaughtering of victims on the tenth of that month.

The spring festival of early Arabia was celebrated in the first decade of Radjab [1]).

The first ten days of Muḥarram have an uncommon value in Islām, especially in Shīʿa countries, but also e. g. in Egypt [2]); in Atchin they are considered as unlucky [3]).

Good works, in the popular Muslim conception, have an extraordinary significance if they are performed in the last ten days of Ramaḍān, or in the first ten of Dhu 'l-Ḥidjdja [4]).

These facts make it probable that the decade was a common subdivision of the month, which contained three decades; all the three decades of Ramaḍān are mentioned in connection with Muhammad's *iʿtikāf*.

It has been observed by Winckler [5]) that in the Old Testament there is a special term, עָשׂוֹר for the period of ten days (Gen. 24, 55; cf. Lev. 16, 29). We may add that in the festal calender of the Jews periods of ten days occur in the months of Ab and Tishri. As to that of Tishri, it is said that divine decrees are

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1) Nawawī ad Muslim IV, 353: والعتيرة ذبيحة كانوا يذبحونها فى العشر الاول من رجب ويسمّونها الرجبيّة

2) Lane, *o. c.*, p. 432. 3) Snouck Hurgronje, *De Atjèhers*, I, 218 *sq.*

4) Tirmidhī, *Ṣawm*, b. 52; Dārimī, *Ṣawm*, b. 52; Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal II, 161 *sq.*; I, 224, 338 *sq.*; II, 75, 131 *sq.*

5) *Altorientalische Forschungen*, ii. 100, note.

taken on the first and that they are sealed on the tenth of that month. The first nine days of Ab were a grave mourning-period. Professor Houtsma has conjectured (without any view to decades) that originally the great day in Ab was not the ninth, but the tenth [1]).

We are, therefore, authorized to say that the reckoning with decades, probably in connection with the month as a period ot three items, is proto-Semitic.

In Babylonian literature there seem to be traces of pentades only [2]). They have found two divergent explanations. Sayce derived the pentade from the decade [3]) and supported his view by pointing to the Greek week of ten days, which according to him went back to the Babylonian calender. Winckler, on the other hand, considers the Babylonian week of five days as the unit next to that of the double hour in the Babylonian sexagesimal system; and Hehn says: "Sie [the pentade] beruht auf der Sechsteilung des dreissigtägigen Monats, bei dem die Benennung des mittleren Tags als Scheide- oder Wendetag (*ša patti*) besonders nahe lag" etc.

I am not able to solve this question. But there are two points of view which I am anxious to emphasize in this connection. The first is, that it is no sound method, to derive all Semitic time reckoning from Babylonia. This was one of Winckler's dreams. The simple fact is that primitive Semitic life in its dependency upon day and night on the one hand, and the phases of the moon on the other, gave rise to a primitive time-reckoning, which was crossed by the reckoning with the seasons in their dependency upon the sun. From the crossing of these two systems arose the difficulties of the early Arabian calendar. Apparently the largest unit of time rising from the moon-system, the month, was divided by the proto-Semites into three decades. There seems to be no evidence proving that the Babylonians have preserved this system.

The second fact to which I wish to draw attention, is this: neither the literature of early Arabia, nor that of Israel seem to have left traces of a reckoning with pentades. Even in the archaic domains of cult and religion they are apparently lacking. It is

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1) *l. c.*, p. 10.

2) J. Hehn, *Siebenzahl und Sabbat bei den Babyloniern und im Alten Testament* (*Leipziger Semitistische Studien*, II, 5), p. 113 *sq.* and note 1.

3) *Proceedings of the Society for Biblical Archaeology*, XIX, p. 288.

therefore not probable that the proto-Semites were acquainted with such a time-reckoning.

Finally it must be said that it seems not allowed to draw from these facts the conclusion that in early Babylonia the pentade originates in a decade which was divided into two equal units. This remains quite uncertain; Babylonia may have gone its own ways in this domain as in other ones.